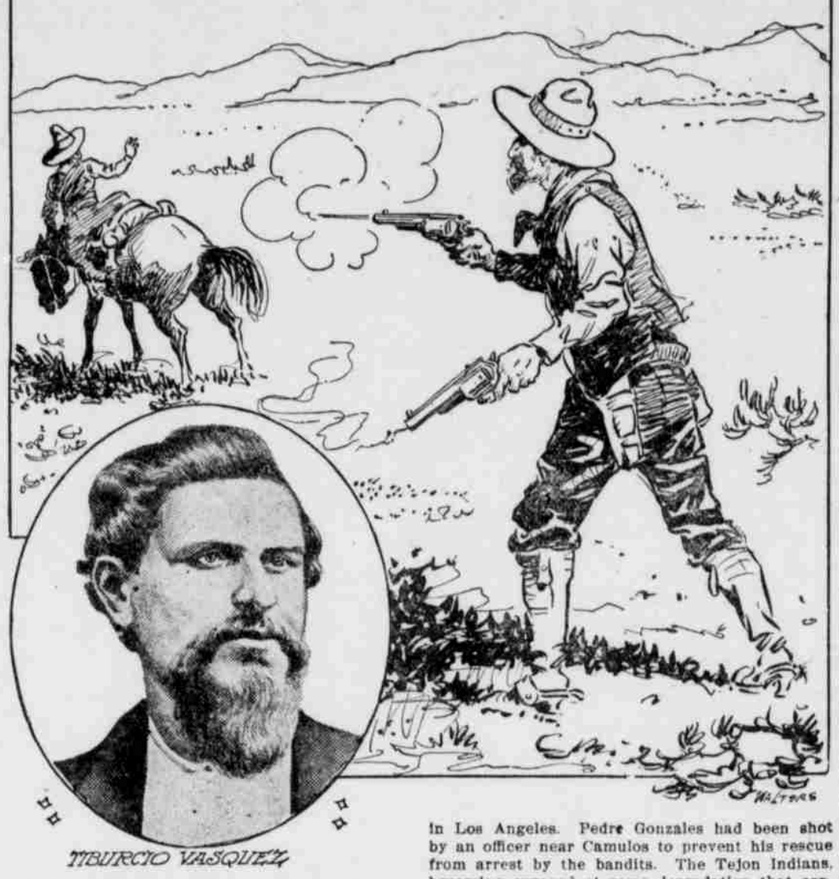
THE BANDITS AND THE BURIED GOLD OF EL TEJON

By HARRY CARR



TIBURCIO VASQUEZ

OLD Joaquin Murrieta's buried gold is growing restless in its hiding place.

One of the herders of El Tejon rancho came in pale and frightened the other night. He had seen a ball of light flickering and dancing along the plateau of the Banderillos. He said it floated along the road in front of him for a long time as though to lead him somewhere. Finally, it stopped by the side of the road; he hurried past and went home as fast as he could. Being a Gringo from Cincinnati, he thought it was a ghost.

Any Mexican vaquero would have recognized the sign. Such a light burns over buried treasure—nowhere else.

Had he followed the light, it would probably have led him to the buried loot of old Joaquin Murrieta, Three-Fingered Jack, Tiburcio Vasquez or some other one of the hundred bandits who infested the Tejon Pass and the Valley of the San Joaquin.

And sir, they were bandits. Dick Turpin! Pough! A wretched piker! Dick Turpin and Claude Duval couldn't have got a job currying horses for Joaquin Murrieta. Don Joaquin was, without doubt, the most terrible, bloodthirsty and successful bandit who ever held up a stage.

He was chief of a band that sometimes numbered nearly a hundred daredevils, and the treasure that he collected must have been enormous.

An examination into the events of his picturesque career would clearly indicate that the stories of his buried gold are not mere vaquero myths. He must have left treasure in considerable quantities cached somewhere in the vicinity of the Tejon ranch—very likely in the Tejon Pass.

Murrieta is described as a very ordinary-looking young Mexican at the time he began his depredations. He sometimes went by the name of Carillo and many suppose that to have been his real name.

He came up from Mexico, where he was born, at the time of the California gold excitement in 1849. With him came a beautiful young Spanish girl of a high-born family. Her name was Roseta Feliz.

She and Joaquin settled in Stanislaus county and had begun washing the gravel for gold when the tragedy occurred that turned Murrieta into the cruelest outlaw the world has known.

At that time there were all manner of race riots through California as a result of the "anti-foreign" mining laws that had been passed. During one of these riots, Murrieta and his bride were driven out of the gold diggings with insult and indignity. Shortly thereafter, Joaquin, while riding a horse borrowed from his half brother, was arrested and whipped as a horse thief.

With black murder in his heart he "took the road," and no one knows how many innocent lives were sacrificed to wipe out the wrong done this Mexican peon when lashed to a tree at Murphy's Diggings in Calaveras county that day when they took him from the borrowed horse.

On account of the injustice of the anti-foreign legislation, there were hundreds of young Mexicans ripe for Joaquin's picking and he soon collected a desperate band of cut-throats. Chief among them were Manuel Garcia, known as Three-Fingered Jack on account of a mutilated hand which had been wounded in the Mexican war; Reyes Feliz, a brother of his bride; Claudio, Joaquin Valenzuela and Pedro Gonzales.

Three-Fingered Jack was a monster of vice and maniacal cruelty. He seemed to take a special delight in murdering Chinese. On one occasion he rounded up six Chinamen on the road, tied their queues together and cut their throats one at a time—laughing at the terrified yells of the living as the dying men struggled in their blood.

For about four years Murrieta's band ravaged central California. Their main field of operations was through the San Joaquin valley. The old-timers say that the stage that ran from Los Angeles to Stockton was held up so many times in the vicinity of Bakersfield that it became an ordinary and commonplace event. No road was safe and every traveler rode at the peril of his life. The solitary horseman, rounding a clump of chaparral, was quite likely to hear the sing of a riata through the air and feel the rope settling around his shoulders with a jerk that dragged him from the saddle. The band of robbers that worked for Murrieta were unique in that the riata was their chief weapon—the riata and the bowie knife. Many of Murrieta's victims were dragged from the saddle and had their throats cut.

There was seldom any parley with the victims nor any mercy shown. With Murrieta it was not only a quest of treasure but a merciless war of revenge against the Gringo.

On one occasion Murrieta and his men held up a schooner on the river near Stockton and, murdering the crew, got away with $20,000.

In the firm discipline that he maintained over his gang of cut-throats, Joaquin was comparable to Robin Hood. Also like Robin Hood, all sorts of stories of his impudent daring and his whimsical kindnesses are told. Some of the stories, in fact, are very like the legends of Sherwood forest and the men in the Lincoln green.

Murrieta took all sorts of reckless chances. On one occasion one of his bandits was on trial in a San Jose court. Murrieta had, shortly before, waylaid and murdered a gentleman named Samuel Harrington. Taking Harrington's papers, Joaquin went into court, pretended to be Harrington, gave false testimony and secured the acquittal of his pal.

Another time, in Sacramento, a crowd stood looking at a poster which offered $5,000 for the capture of Murrieta. A Mexican pushed his way through the crowd and wrote on the bottom of the placard: "I will give $10,000 myself—Joaquin Murrieta;" jumped on a horse and escaped.

As might be imagined, the horrors of Murrieta's crimes roused a great hue and cry throughout California. Hunted like wild animals, Murrieta and his followers selected a dark canyon near the mouth of Tejon Pass for their headquarters and divided into three bands.

The country was becoming too dangerous for him to continue his work in. Claudio had been killed in a desperate battle at San Luis Obispo. Feliz, Joaquin's brother-in-law, had been hanged in Los Angeles. Pedro Gonzales had been shot by an officer near Camulos to prevent his rescue from arrest by the bandits. The Tejon Indians, becoming enraged at some depredation that concerned them, had swooped down upon the bandits, stole their horses and whipped some of the gang with lashes.

Although he wreaked a horrible revenge against those who tried to capture him, he never made any attempt to punish these Indians who took even the clothes from the gang.

General Bean of San Gabriel, who tried to organize a movement against Murrieta, was waylaid on the road and murdered. A campaign was started against the bandits in the town of Saw Mill Flat and Murrieta had the water poisoned.

But finally, Murrieta's Nemesis appeared. He was a Texas frontiersman, named Harry Love, who had come to Los Angeles to live. He organized a company of rangers from among the daring horsemen of Los Angeles and went on a systematic hunt for outlaws.

After various adventures and narrow escapes on both sides, the end came early one Sunday morning, July 25, 1853. Love and two or three companions were riding ahead of the mounted rangers on the flats just west of Tulare lake in the San Joaquin valley. They came upon a small company of Mexicans eating breakfast around a camp fire.

Love asked them what they were doing and one of them replied that they were on their way to Los Angeles. He asked a further question of one of the peons; whereupon a Mexican on the other side of the fire spoke up haughtily, saying: "I am the leader of this band; say what you have to say to me."

"I will speak to whomever I please," retorted Love. Noticing that the Mexican had risen and was sidling over toward a saddle that lay on the ground, Captain Love covered him with a revolver and told him to stand still, for there were revolvers on the saddle.

While they were standing there, a ranger who knew Murrieta by sight came up. The recognition was mutual. Joaquin suddenly yelled for his men to escape as best they could. Leaping on a horse without saddle or bridle, Murrieta went headlong over a bank and down into a ravine, landing in a tumbled heap at the bottom. Neither his horse nor himself was hurt, however.

Scrambling to their feet, they started off at a dead run down the canyon. One of the rangers had followed them. His horse had fallen also. Without attempting to remount, he took careful aim and shot Murrieta's horse as it ran.

The outlaw leaped from the falling horse and continued his retreat on foot. By this time half a dozen rangers were following him. Three times, as they fired, he was seen to hesitate and reel; then run on again. One last shot and he stopped.

Turning, he raised his hand and said: "Don't shoot any more; the work is done." He stood for a minute with weakening limbs; then he sank slowly to his right side, his head upon his arm. Wicked old Joaquin Murrieta was no more. Another pursuing party overtook and killed Three-Fingered Jack. One of the bandits escaped and drowned himself in the San Joaquin river. Another was murdered by Mexicans who were afraid he might reveal to the authorities their connection with the band.

Murrieta's head was cut off and, until the San Francisco earthquake, was on exhibition in a museum in San Francisco.

At the time of his death Don Joaquin was preparing his grandest coup. He intended to collect all his booty, and march his men openly, like an army, into Mexico. The old-timers assert that he had his loot cached in the Tejon for this "get-away" and that it is still there.

Ismael Ramirez says that he spent three months looking for the buried gold. One rainy night he saw the mystic light flickering underneath an old oak tree back of the ruins of Fort Tejon. He carefully noted the location, intending to dig at the indicated spot the next morning. When he went there at down, however, he found that a rancher had also seen the light. Ramirez found an enormous hole and a great iron kettle from which the rancher had taken $30,000 in gold.

According to all reports the light has begun to dance and flicker again around the Tejon ready to guide some one to the uneasy gold of the arch cut-throat and bandit, Joaquin Murrieta.

POTENTATES AMUSE LONDON

When a foreign potentate or royalty of minor rank visits London for the first time, a clerk from the foreign office is usually detailed by the government to "show him round," or, in official language, to act as the potentate's "visiting attache."

I have acted on several occasions officially as guide, counselor, and friend to a number of minor foreign royal personages, and when doing so have had some rather amusing experiences.

I acted as attache to Prince Lidj Eyassau, of the Abyssinian royal family, when he came to London some years ago. He was rather an awkward sort of person to have to take charge of. He had a habit when he went into a shop of picking up things to look at, and if they did not take his fancy, of dropping them to the ground in the most lordly and disdainful manner.

On one occasion we went into a dealer's shop in Bond street, where he took up an old Dresden vase and, after looking at it critically for a few minutes, threw it to the ground. I made a frantic but unavailing effort to catch it. The prince had subsequently to pay £300 to the dealer for the vase.

Another gentleman I had the honor of escorting about London for a couple of weeks was the Sultan of Oran. I went with him to a dinner party one night given at one of the embassies. All went well until the end of the dinner, when the ambassador and his wife rose from the table. The chief guest then suddenly hit the table a resounding blow with his fist, and shouted out something in his native tongue, while his eyes appeared to blaze with anger as he glared first at his host and hostess and then at their guests. No one seemed to know quite what to do.

Then, in a low undertone, the sultan explained to me in French he was endeavoring to thank his host for his hospitality, and the incident ended happily.

Occasionally minor foreign potentates who come here neglect to make proper arrangements about having money advised to them from their native country to London, and, as a result, find themselves in considerable financial embarrassments when they get here.

Some years ago a prince of the reigning family of a minor European state arrived in London for a short visit without a penny.

The attache, however, who was commissioned to look after him, brought a pawnbroker to the hotel where the prince was staying, who advanced £1,000 on the prince's jewels, which lasted the prince until he obtained money from his own country, fortunately only a few days later.

One of the most amusing incidents I remember in connection with my experiences as a visiting attache was when I took the then crown prince of Siam to a great society bazaar. The prince evidently did not understand, though I tried to explain to him, that the ladies selling at the bazaar were persons of high rank.

A few minutes after he entered the bazaar several great ladies approached him, asking him to buy some of their wares. One of these was a duchess. "Tell these women to kneel when they address me," he said to me in broken French. The ladies, who understood him, promptly did so, and succeeded in taking about £50 off the prince before they rose. Nothing on earth could, however, convince the crown prince of the high rank of the saleswomen.

GETTING ORDERS.

Business Manager—Well, how many orders did you get yesterday?

New Salesman—I got two orders in one place.

Business Manager—That's the stuff! What were they?

New Salesman—One was to get out and the other was to stay out.—Cornell Widow.

NOT HARD TO MAKE A GUESS

Asylum Superintendent Does Not Reveal Name of Last Relative to Visit Lunatic, but We Know It.

The lunatics tore up and down the white beach; they howled and leaped in the blue sea, quite like sane people.

"They enjoy the summer outing at our shore branch," the superintendent said. "It does 'em good, poor dubs!

"It's a funny thing about a lunatic's relatives. There are reliable statistics about the way a lunatic's relatives stand by him.

"The relative who stands by a lunatic least, who stops visiting him in the asylum first of all, is a brother. The next relative to drop off is a wife. That sounds hard, but it's true. Don't count on your wife if you are going to become a lunatic. Next, husbands drop off. A little truer than wives husbands are, but only a little. Next fathers abandon the lunatic. Next sisters.

"One relative never abandons him till she dies, or he dies, she comes regularly on visiting day, bringing underwear and ties, cakes and tobacco—provided, of course, that the lunatic's a male. If it's a female this relative is equally faithful. And even though, as sometimes happens, the poor, mad creature hates her, curses her, tries to strike her when she visits him, she still remains faithful. When her visits cease they cease for only one reason—death.

"Nor do I need to tell you which relative this one is."

Quite Late.

Tardy Arrival (at the concert)—Have I missed much? What are they playing now?

One of the Elect—The Ninth Symphony.

Tardy Arrival—Goodness, am I as late as that?

He Thinks It Helps.

"What is an optimist?"

"A man who thinks that if he puts "Urgent" on a letter it will be delivered sooner than it would be otherwise."—Stray Stories.

Pa Explains.

"Pa, what does 'o-o-n-v-e-r-s-a-z-i-o-n-e mean?"

"That is merely an Italian word for a little chin music, son. Now, run along and play."

Royal Metamorphosis.

"The King, changing into a four-horsed carriage, drove through the Cattle section."

A characteristic example of kingly tact.—Punch.

Improving on the Idea.

"Is that amateur musical organization moribund?"

"It's worse than that. It's as dead as a door nail."

Fashionable Sanitarium.

"The boss is worried about the new patient."

"He seems weak."

"Yes; too weak to sign a check."

Always Moving.

"Does Gubbins ever make a move at the club meetings?"

"Oh, lots of them. He's got St. Vitus' dance."

Mean Man.

"Papa, I want an ice cream sundae."

"All right, dear, remind me of it again, this is only Tuesday."

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NO POSSIBILITY OF DOUBT

Why Western Bishop Was Convinced of the Ancient Lineage of His Eastern Entertainers.

A western bishop once attended a general convention in the east and was entertained by a New England family of long and honorable, if not lovable, lineage. They made no secret of a time-won superiority over any one from the new and crude west, and cited their Pilgrim ancestors constantly. The bishop was minded to bear this in Christian humility and forbearance, and did. But on his return home, he recounted his experiences to the wife; and she, good soul, spoke her mind as it is the privilege of her kind to do, even where mere man must be silent.

"I don't believe that their family is such an old one," she remarked. "'Are you sure that their ancestors were Pilgrims?'

"I am certain, my dear," answered the bishop. "This may seem to be exaggeration, but at times you could positively detect the fragrance of the Mayflower."—New York Evening Post.

Too Well.

"Why was that actress unsuccessful in the swooning scene?"

"Because, strange to say, she made quite a faint effort."

As Usual

"Who scored the new musical comedy?"

"The critics, chiefly."

Ostriches and alligators are raised in incubators in South Africa.

FUNDS FOR FIGHTING PLAGUE

State Legislatures in 1913 Made Generous Appropriations to Check the Spread of Tuberculosis.

Out of 41 state legislatures in session during the season of 1913, laws dealing with tuberculosis were enacted in 30 states, while in 34 states consideration was given to bills dealing with the prevention of this disease. This is a summary of the legislative campaign for 1913, issued by the National Association for the Study and Prevention of Tuberculosis today.

Appropriations to the amount of over $5,000,000 have been set aside for the treatment and prevention of tuberculosis by the various state legislatures in session this year. Most of this money is for the maintenance of state sanatoria. There are at the present time 29 such institutions in 31 different states, Connecticut, Massachusetts and Pennsylvania, each having more than one sanatorium. Delaware is the only state which has made provision for a state sanatorium for tuberculous negroes. In addition to the amounts appropriated by the various state governments, congress will be obliged to set aside nearly $1,000,000 for the maintenance of the United States public health, the army and the navy sanatoria, and the tuberculosis hospital of the District of Columbia.

Not for Long.

"Now I am twenty-one, and my own master!"

"Yes, but you are engaged."

The diplomatic flat dweller calls the janitor the superintendent.

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